

NGDA Lifecycle Maturity Assessment (LMA)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC)

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1. Why use LimeSurvey for the NGDA LMA?

Answer: The NGDA LMA utilizes LimeSurvey to simplify the assessment process by providing a single online tool that alleviates the need to manage separate e-mails and documents. The tool also automates reporting and provides online data storage. LMA results are included as an input for NGDA Dataset, Theme, and Portfolio Summary reports.

2. Why isn't my 2015 information in the 2017 NGDA LMA tool?

Answer: The 2015 LMA information is not available in the 2017 tool because so many questions and responses were modified as well as the justification text removed. These enhancements should improve the time needed to complete the LMA. The 2015 responses are available at [NGDA Datasets](#) and click on your dataset (from the left most column) to view the 2015 NGDA Dataset Report. The report includes responses and justifications provided during the 2015 LMA.

3. Are there training materials available to assist with users of the NGDA LMA LimeSurvey?

Answer: Yes – the recording from the training webinar as well as the presentation slides (in PDF format) are available online: [https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017 LMA](https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017%20LMA).

4. How many questions do I need to answer?

Answer: All questions need to be answered. The LMA consists of 3 general questions followed by 20 maturity questions and 12 justification questions organized across the seven lifecycle stages or pertaining to all stages, plus 2 feedback questions.

5. Where does the information collected from the NGDA LMA reside? Is there a database associated with it?

Answer: The results are stored online in the open source tool called LimeSurvey. This includes information for each NGDA including responses to questions. This information provides information contained in the [LMA Performance Dashboard on GeoPlatform.gov](#), and NGDA Dataset, Theme, and Portfolio Summary reports.

6. Will tokens be issued for the 2017 year's assessment?

Answer: Yes. Each NGDA Dataset Manager will be issued a token specific to their NGDA Dataset(s).



7. Can the NGDA LMA survey tokens be shared?

Answer: You can share a token, however, only one person should fill out the assessment. All responsible POCs can utilize the [National Geospatial Dataset Asset 2017 Lifecycle Maturity Assessment](#) (word document) to develop responses and review prior to completing the assessment in the online tool.

8. How does the LMA help me?

Answer: The LMA can help identify areas where maturity levels are doing well or areas where maturity improvement could be achieved. The results provide a way to quickly show managers and supervisors any areas of concern (e.g., loss of funding, lack of resources, inability to obtain data, etc.)

9. I have multiple NGDAs, will I receive multiple tokens?

Answer: Yes. If you are a Dataset Manager for 3 datasets, you will receive 3 tokens (all unique). If an NGDA is an aggregate of multiple datasets then only 1 token will be received.

10. I have an NGDA that is comprised of multiple datasets, will I receive multiple tokens?

Answer: No, only each official NGDA Dataset will receive a token. The NGDA LMA does address this. For more information, see [“My NGDA is not one dataset, but many datasets – how is this handled in the Justification Comments?”](#).

11. My NGDA is not one dataset, but many datasets – how is this handled in the Justification Comments?

Answer: For 2017, respond as if the aggregate of datasets was one dataset. Further discussions with the Dataset Managers and Theme Lead may help determine if the NGDA should be split into separate datasets or be maintained as one for the best LMA results.

12. What should I do if I didn't receive my NGDA LMA invitation?

Answer: Email invitations will be auto-generated and sent from the NGDA LMA Help Desk (NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov), please check your Junk and/or Spam folder to ensure it was not redirected. If you still do not see the invitation or correct token, please e-mail the NGDA LMA Help Desk (NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov).



13. Why do I have to manually input the Reviewer information (i.e. Theme Lead and Executive Champion) if these positions have already been identified for all NGDAs and are saved in an existing spreadsheet?

Answer: This section allows you to identify who reviewed the assessment not all of the associated NGDA personnel. The NGDA Theme Leads and NGDA Executive Champions are on the [FGDC website](#). For a list of NGDA Dataset Managers, contact the NGDA LMA Help Desk via NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov.

14. Is this assessment available for internal use within an organization or for Dataset Managers supporting other datasets not identified as an NGDA?

Answer 1: No. The LimeSurvey is only open to NGDA Dataset Managers who received a token. At the end of the assessment, the LMA data and results can be saved as a PDF from LimeSurvey for review with others in your organization. After the 2017 LMA is closed, the results will be made available via the [LMA dashboard on GeoPlatform.gov](#). However, if an organization is interested in the NGDA Lifecycle Maturity Assessment for other purposes, the NGDA LMA resources are available online via GeoPlatform.gov 2017 LMA Community site: <https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017LMA>.

15. What do I need to know about justification text boxes for question response options and pick lists?

Answer: The 2017 LMA reduces the use of justification text boxes by using the information from the 2015 LMA as a basis for pick lists. However, in some cases, a justification text box will appear where additional detail is needed. The Clarifying Statements provide examples and additional information for each question. The text box limit is 3500 characters (including spaces). For longer answers, using MS Word or Notepad will allow you to easily 'cut-n-paste' text into the justification text box. The *National Geospatial Dataset Asset Management Plan 2017 Lifecycle Maturity Assessment* word document can be found online at <https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017LMA>, along with other resources.

16. What level of detail is required in the Justification Comments?

Answer: The level of detail must provide sufficient information to justify the response selected. Generally, justification is required if no activity has taken place in a particular stage of the lifecycle. Justification is also required if pick list selection options don't meet your criteria and "other" is selected. The use of the "other" answer option, and the additional detail provided, will be used in the analysis and for developing future LMA pick lists.



17. Some of the questions appear to be the same or very similar; how should I address those?

Answer: Questions may be related but are differentiated between “defining requirements” and “meeting requirements” and are specific to each stage of the geospatial data lifecycle. Referencing previous responses is acceptable, but ensure the maturity response is justified. As an example, questions Q2 and Q7 are related to sensitivity. Q2 asks about open government and transparency for all stages while Q7 is specific to sensitivity, privacy and confidentiality assessed in Stage 1 Define/Plan. Another example relates to business requirements in questions Q4 and Q16. Q4 asks about defining business requirements in Stage 1 Define/Plan while Q16 assesses how those business requirements are meeting user needs in Stage 6 Use/Evaluate.

18. How far back do I need to go? Should we report on the current state or date back to an earlier time?

Answer: For NGDA that had an initial baseline assessment completed in 2015, we rely on the Dataset Managers to determine what changes to assess and report on for the current reporting period of 2015 to present.

For NGDA Datasets that have not had an initial baseline assessment completed previously, the goal of the first assessment is to include all pertinent information associated with the dataset up to the most recently defined business requirements. Historical documents are not required but can be referenced, and may be prior to 1990. Datasets created after 1990 can go back to the creation date or a significant change to the business requirements.

19. How often do I need to save my work and how do I save it?

Answer: **Do NOT** leave LimeSurvey open for more than 1 hour without saving or it will timeout and ALL information entered will be lost. Users are strongly encouraged to use the navigation buttons within the survey. Please **Do NOT** click the back arrow on your browser, instead, please use the ‘**Back**’ and ‘**Next**’ buttons available on the bottom of each page of the survey. ‘Next’ will save your work up to the point you have entered information. ‘Back’ will display information you have previously entered. These buttons must be utilized to ensure your answers are saved before leaving the survey and exiting the browser session. Cookies must be enabled. Cookies are required to return to the previous session. It is also recommended you use the MS Word or Notepad to easily develop responses and then ‘cut-n-paste’ text into justification text boxes where needed. The [National Geospatial Dataset Asset Management Plan 2017 Lifecycle Maturity Assessment](#) word document can be found online at <https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017LMA>, along with other resources for use in completing the assessment. The LMA is open and available to edit, revisit, or resubmit from May 8, 2017 to August 4, 2017.



20. How do ensure my input is saved?

Answer: Clicking 'Next' will save your inputs on the current page. Before leaving a page make sure you click 'Next'! Do not use your browser buttons to navigate. Ensure that **cookies are enabled** in your browser so you can return to a previous session later.

21. How do I navigate across different sections?

Answer: Please use the Question Index bar on the right side of the screen to navigate to other sections or use the survey buttons 'next' or 'back'. **Do NOT use** the browser forward and back buttons.

22. How can I print out my assessment for easy review?

Answer: If you would like to print or export your answers, please wait until you reach the "Review and Approval" page. At the bottom, click the green button for "Print PDF" options. A pop up window will open and you can choose the destination for your printer or to save as a PDF. Please use the 'landscape' orientation option for either printing or exporting to PDF.

23. Where can I learn more about the Maturity Matrix to understand the rankings?

Answer: The 2017 Maturity Matrix defines overall maturity for all stages and is available online at <https://www.geoplatform.gov/A-16-NGDA-Theme-Community/2017LMA>.

24. How can I determine if the LMA has been successfully submitted?

Answer: The LMA for an NGDA can be submitted when all information has been successfully entered into the LMA, the respondent inputting information has been identified (if different than the dataset manager), and the reviewer text boxes are completed. When you click the submit button you can print all of the 2017 LMA for your review. At a later date, if you need to make changes, you can re-enter and resubmit up through the closing date of August 4, 2017.

25. Who do I contact for help?

Answer: For questions or assistance, please contact the NGDA LMA Help Desk via NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov.



26. Who will be reviewing NGDA LMA inputs?

Answer: The NGDA LMA team will be reviewing the input provided while the assessment is open. If there are questions, they will reach out to the Dataset Managers or the assigned person entering the assessment information. Periodic status briefings will be provided to the Theme Leads and Dataset Managers while the assessment is taking place. However, once completed, the assessment should be reviewed by a designated agency or Theme representative (e.g., Supervisor, Theme Lead, Executive Champion, etc.).

27. How do I provide feedback on the NGDA LMA?

Answer: All feedback is welcome and helps drive future improvements. There are two feedback mechanisms available: the Feedback page at end of survey or the NGDA LMA e-mail:

NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov.

28. We are working in the NGDA LMA word document to complete the assessment offline before entering the information online; should we still report our progress?

Answer: Yes, please report your progress to the NGDA LMA team via NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov even if you complete the assessment on paper before entering it online. This will ensure that accurate progress reports are provided to managers, the Government Accounting Office (GAO), or others interested in the process as needed.

29. Are there NGDA LMA Status Reports available for Dataset Managers and Theme Leads to access?

Answer: Yes, the NGDA LMA Status Reports will be available monthly through the internal NGDA Collaboration Community site (login required): <https://cms.geoplatform.gov/ncc>. In addition, submitters are provided an opportunity to export results directly from the online survey into a PDF format. If you need an individual report, please contact the NGDA LMA team via NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov. After the LMA is closed for 2017, each NGDA will be available for lifecycle maturity review on the [GeoPlatform.gov Performance Dashboard](#).



30. Is there a recommended approach for assembling information needed about the NGDA Dataset for the LMA data?

Answer: The approach is up to the NGDA Dataset Managers. The 17 Theme Leads should be communicating and collaborating with their Dataset Managers on completing the assessment even if all the datasets are not in their agency. As an example, a Theme may have a central person to aggregate results based on regular meetings and outreach conducted to each Dataset Manager. Another example is a Theme appointing an A-16 coordinator to facilitate coordination across the Dataset Managers as well as with the NGDA LMA team. The Coordinator may host brown bags and training sessions to help Dataset Managers and Theme Leads handle their responsibility. Maintaining awareness and open communication is key!

31. I'm having trouble getting the key people needed to respond and assist with inputting data to the LMA, what should I do?

Answer: If Theme Leads and Dataset Managers are unsuccessful with coordination efforts or unable to obtain the necessary information to complete the LMA, please contact the NGDA LMA team via NGDA_LMA_help@fgdc.gov so it can be brought to the attention of the FGDC Coordination Group. As we collectively learn how this process is evolving, it's important to keep the communication open to help facilitate coordination.

32. Will there be negative impacts for a low maturity score?

Answer: The LMA process is designed to determine what lifecycle activities are occurring across the A-16 NGDA portfolio based on a set of business requirements and help determine how Federal agencies are achieving the goals of the NSDI. Outputs such as reports and dashboards should be used by Dataset Managers as an opportunity to show results to the managers to increase their awareness about the status of NGDAs and use the process as an opportunity for communication on where these datasets need more resources to increase the maturity levels. The goal, as we respond to the assessment results, is to ensure that the Federal agencies and our stakeholders can get the data needed for implementing business and mission goals. This will make users more confident about the quality and consistency of the data.

33. Is there a way to show a trend instead of a snapshot in time or a way to backdate assessments to show how a dataset changed over time?

Answer: The idea is that beginning with the initial baseline LMA completed in 2015 and with updates provided in each subsequent LMA, trend analysis and visualization to show NGDA Dataset maturity changes over time will be possible.



34. Will questions be changed, added, or removed in future LMAs?

Answer: Based on feedback and future requirements, questions in the LMA may be adjusted, added, or removed in the survey to provide clarification or better evaluate criteria and capture LMA metrics.